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Letter dated 22 April 2003 from the Permanent Representative of Côte d'Ivoire to the United Nations addressed to the President of the Security Council

I have the honour to transmit to you herewith the text of the letter dated 11 April 2003 sent by the President of the Republic, Mr. Laurent Gbagbo, to the Chairman of the Monitoring Committee for the Linas-Marcoussis Agreement (S/2003/99, annex I) (see annex), which I mentioned in my meeting with you on 16 April.

I should be grateful if you would have it distributed as a document of the Security Council.

(*Signed*) D. Philippe **Djangone-Bi**
Ambassador
Permanent Representative

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Annex to the letter dated 22 April 2003 from the Permanent Representative of Côte d'Ivoire to the United Nations addressed to the President of the Security Council

11 April 2003

Sir,

Just as I am preparing to address a message to the nation so that all the parties will agree to sit down and talk with a view to the full resumption of government activities and economic, social and cultural activities throughout the national territory, the rebels are stepping up their attacks on all fronts: in the west, the centre-west, the east and the north-east.

For several days now, tensions have been rising again on the country's eastern front (Bondoukou-Bouna region) as a result of rebel attacks.

Between 3 and 5 April 2003, the attackers stepped up their attacks on positions of the national defence and security forces, in the process resorting to robbery, looting and then harassment of the civilian population, especially in the village of Kouakoudou, situated seven kilometres from the town of Sandégué.

During the night of 9 to 10 April 2003, in the village of Sanguinaré on the Bondoukou-Bouna road, rebels surrounded the Ghanaian positions of the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS) Peace Force for Côte d'Ivoire (ECOFORCE) in order to ambush Ivorian troops of the national army of Côte d'Ivoire (FANCI). Throughout Wednesday, 9 April 2003, around 300 rebel fighters of the Mouvement Patriotique de Côte d'Ivoire (MPCI), travelling in some 15 vehicles equipped with heavy weaponry and assault rifles, launched renewed attacks on that village and on FANCI positions.

Around 5.30 this morning, 11 April 2003, the rebels attacked Gansé, a village on the Bondoukou-Nassian road, in the area controlled by government troops. There is no doubt that, through these repeated attacks, MPCI rebel fighters are aiming to take the town of Bondoukou.

At the very same time, the police station in the town of Zuénoula in the centre-west of the country was the target of a rebel attack.

These attacks demonstrate on the ground the rebels' intention of resuming the war and seizing State power by force of arms, thereby undermining the fledgling peace process that I have always supported and will continue to support.

I therefore deem it appropriate to make a vigorous protest to the Monitoring Committee for the Linas-Marcoussis Agreement (S/2003/99, annex I), which is chaired by you and whose main task is to identify weaknesses and obstacles and take appropriate corrective action.

In this somewhat delicate phase of the national reconciliation process, I trust that the ECOWAS forces and those of France's Operation Licorne will be able to perform impartially their mission to ensure a speedy return to normalcy and peace in Côte d'Ivoire, taking effective, forceful action against those whose actions are contributing to a stalemate in the situation to induce them to honour the commitments made before the international community.

Laurent **Gbagbo**
President of the Republic of Côte d'Ivoire